

EXHIBIT B



Fire Department Investigations Unit
911 H Street
Fresno, California 93721-3083



Fire Investigations Unit Supervisor
Don MacAlpine, Deputy Fire Marshal
(559) 621-4440 FAX # (559) 457-1223

FIRE INVESTIGATIONS REPORT

FFD EVENT #: 16-003909
CASE #: 16-004815
CLASSIFICATION: Incendiary
DATE: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 @ 1511 hours
LOCATION: 648 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno, CA, 93728
VICTIM: [REDACTED]
REPORTING OFFICER: Tracy, Jay #F685
REPORT #: 16-003909.JT.15

SYNOPSIS

This report documents my actions related to an occupied residential fire investigation.

The fire caused moderate fire damage.

There was one fatality, related to this fire incident, identified at the time of this report.

The classification of this fire is incendiary.

No suspects have been identified at the time of this report.

SOURCE OF ACTIVITY

On Saturday, January 20, 2016 at approximately 1511 hours, Fresno County Dispatch received a 911 call reporting a structure fire at 648 North Van Ness Avenue, Fresno City, in the county of Fresno, California 93728. A full residential first alarm assignment was dispatched at approximately 1512 hours. Three engines, two trucks, two battalion chiefs and one EMS unit responded.

The first fire unit arrived on scene at approximately 1515 hours. Initial size-up reported a two story, single-family, residential structure with smoke showing from the A-B corner. Smoke was witnessed coming from the front porch area and the subfloor below the front window near the A-B corner. A working fire notification broadcast at approximately 1515 hours.

At approximately 1512 hours, while working my normal schedule with the Fresno Fire Department as a Staff Investigator – I04, I responded to the incident code 2 from the area of Blackstone Ave. and Olive Ave. after clearing from another detail. I arrived at the fire scene at approximately 1515 hours. I cleared the fire scene at approximately 2200 hours.

OBSERVATIONS/ACTIONS

Upon my arrival, I observed one FFD apparatus – Engine 3 and multiple suppression personnel engaged in initial investigation and size up. The FFD suppression crews were required to force entry of a man gate and vehicle gate to gain access to the residence. More FFD apparatus arrived after my arrival and began to assist with suppression efforts. Scene Investigator – I01 Perez, RJ #F363 also arrived at this time.



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I witnessed light smoke coming from the Alpha side of the structure and the area around the front door and front window. The smoke appeared to be coming from the A-B corner of the residence, possibly near the subfloor below the front window. Forced entry was attempted at the front door without success; the door seemed to be heavily fortified and eventually required the use of a chainsaw to gain entry. A few minutes later flames could be seen in the front window. Ingress was also attempted on the Bravo side door. This door also proved difficult to breach due to apparent fortification. Entry was obtained about the same time from the portals, front and side doors. Fire was present in the front room near the front window and door. The fire seemed difficult to extinguish; the fire was easily "pushed" with the fire stream.

While gathering witness statements, I witnessed FFD suppression crews extricate a victim, later identified as [REDACTED], from the residence. The victim was extricated out the front door and placed on the driveway where BLS measures were initiated by FFD suppression crews. I noted the victim was [REDACTED] I then went to the street to notify EMS that a victim had been extricated and their assistance would be required. Three notification attempts were made before EMS responded. I also requested the Uniformed Patrol Officer from the Fresno Police Department (FPD), who was also present shortly after my arrival and assisted with traffic control initially, to assist in clearing the roadway for EMS who would be transporting soon.

I returned to the location of the victim and made contact with Scene Investigator Perez. As we began to develop a plan we were advised by Fire Captain Fulmer, Tim that the victim had [REDACTED]. At this time I logged on with FPD and requested assistance from FPD dispatch. Contact was made again with the Uniformed Patrol Officer and a request was made to assist in locking down the scene due to the nature of the [REDACTED].

Scene Investigator Perez and I then made contact with the FFD Incident Commander, Battalion Chief – BC1 Tuggle, Todd #F07297 and requested that all non-essential efforts inside the residence be stopped and access to the residence be denied. The residence was secured and no personnel entered. Staff Investigator – I02 Wilding, Lee #F634 arrived to assist with the investigation. Investigator Wilding was assigned the Investigation Team IC position. Fresno PD Homicide unit eventually arrived and assisted with the investigation. FPD homicide detectives Rivera #P1146 and Dodd #P280 later arrived on scene. FPD Lieutenant Farrah and Sergeant Bowlan also arrived and assisted with the investigation.

I further assisted with the investigation by conducting interviews, assisting with documenting of the fire scene with digital photographs and a sketch of the residence, entry/exit record keeping and processing the area of origin and collecting evidence.



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INVESTIGATION

Methodology

During the course of my investigation I was able to obtain witness statements. I conducted the interviews in full uniform identifying myself as a Fire Investigator with the Fresno Fire Department. The following is a summary of the statements I collected.

Summary of Statements

Contact with Mr. Fuentes was made as the incident unfolded. Mr. Fuentes' residence is [REDACTED] of the fire location. He was in his front yard when I arrived on scene and contacted him. Mr. Fuentes has lived in his residence for several years and has a good relationship with his neighbor.

Summary statements of Fuentes, Reynaldo (WITNESS FUENTES):

[REDACTED]
WITNESS FUENTES reported having personal knowledge about the resident at 648 N. Van Ness Ave., later identified as [REDACTED]. WITNESS FUENTES reported he was asleep and woke to the sounds of sirens in close proximity. He exited his residence to witness fire apparatus from FFD in front of his residence and the neighbor's house to the north of him. He was attempting to contact the owner of the residence when I made contact with him in his front yard.

WITNESS FUENTES gave me the name [REDACTED] and identified him as the owner and resident of 648 N. Van Ness Ave. He also gave me the cell phone number he was leaving a message on; the cell phone that was owned by [REDACTED]. WITNESS FUENTES denied any recent issues with the house and stated the resident, [REDACTED], was quiet and kept to himself. He reportedly came and went quietly. WITNESS FUENTES denied knowledge of any personal or professional problems. **End of Statement.**

Contact with Ms. Montgomery was made as the incident unfolded. Ms. Montgomery's residence is [REDACTED] from the fire location. She was in her front yard when I arrived on scene and contacted her.

Summary statements of Montgomery, Sarah (WITNESS MONTGOMERY):

[REDACTED]
WITNESS MONTGOMERY reported that she responded to the front of her house with her [REDACTED] after hearing a fire engine responding to an incident nearby. The fire incident happened to be just [REDACTED] of her residence. While watching the firefighters work [REDACTED] notified her that [REDACTED] saw smoke coming from the house across the street; WITNESS MONTGOMERY pointed to the fire scene as the location. Initially she reported she could not see the smoke without relocating to the sidewalk to get a better perspective. She reported that she was in a bit of disbelief as well.



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WITNESS MONTGOMERY stated she witnessed light smoke coming from the A-B corner of the residence. The smoke was reported to be coming from the lower part of the wall, below and to the side of the front window. She also witnessed flames in the front window. Attempts were made to alert the firefighters down the street without success. She was eventually able to alert the firefighters (Engine Company 3) and received a response. WITNESS MONTGOMERY did not witness anyone in or around the residence during her time outside her residence.

WITNESS MONTGOMERY stated she did not really know the neighbor [REDACTED]. She reported meeting him and that he seemed like a nice man. He was reported to be quiet and kept to himself. No other information noted that would be considered out of the ordinary. **End of Statement.**

Contact with Mrs. Ramirez was initiated as she stood near the incident and responded when asked if anyone knew who lived in the residence where the fire was. Mrs. Ramirez returned twice, later in the incident, to provide more information. The last time was following the arrival of the spouse of the deceased.

Summary statements of Ramirez, Maxine (WITNESS RAMIREZ):

WITNESS RAMIREZ reported she resided at [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] of the fire location) up until about six weeks ago. She lived at the residence for several years and reported she had a good relationship with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who was approximately [REDACTED]. WITNESS RAMIREZ reported information about [REDACTED] and his relationship with his [REDACTED] that implied their relationship was strained. WITNESS RAMIREZ stated that [REDACTED] would be dropped off at the curb and no contact between the adults was made. WITNESS RAMIREZ reported that one afternoon [REDACTED] arrived at his residence and was upset and crying. WITNESS RAMIREZ did not know the specifics of the incident that upset [REDACTED]. Shortly after [REDACTED] reported that he had had enough and was going to pursue gaining [REDACTED] despite the risks associated with the move. When asked about what he was referring to a reference was made about the fact that is [REDACTED] "knows people who do bad things".

WITNESS RAMIREZ reported that [REDACTED] seemed fearful for his security, safety and wellbeing. She reported that [REDACTED] had several incidents of theft from his property and home. WITNESS RAMIREZ reported [REDACTED] also felt he was being watched, that Fresno PD was after him and that something bad was going to happen to him soon. Many of the fortifications found in the residence were increased in the last couple of weeks but the paranoia and preparations were always in place according to WITNESS RAMIREZ.

WITNESS RAMIREZ returned to the scene to speak with me regarding [REDACTED]. The statements were given as a result of the contempt WITNESS RAMIREZ felt [REDACTED]



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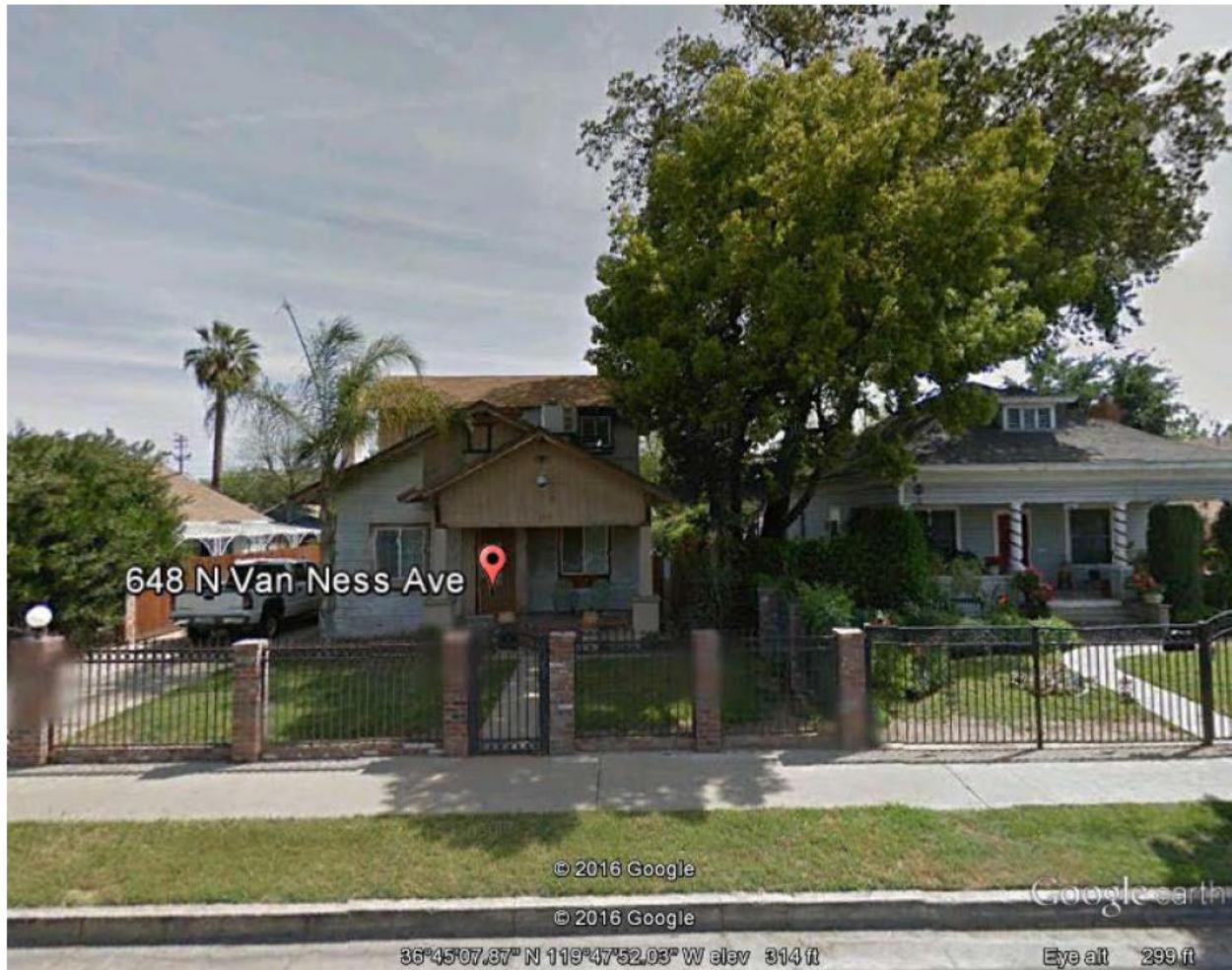
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[REDACTED] showed when she arrived at the scene.

WITNESS RAMIREZ stated many of the fears possessed and preparations made by [REDACTED] were overboard in WITNESS RAMIREZ's mind, until the incident with [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] reportedly informed WITNESS RAMIREZ that his [REDACTED] had a background that included people who could be hired to do "anything". **End of Statement.**

Street view



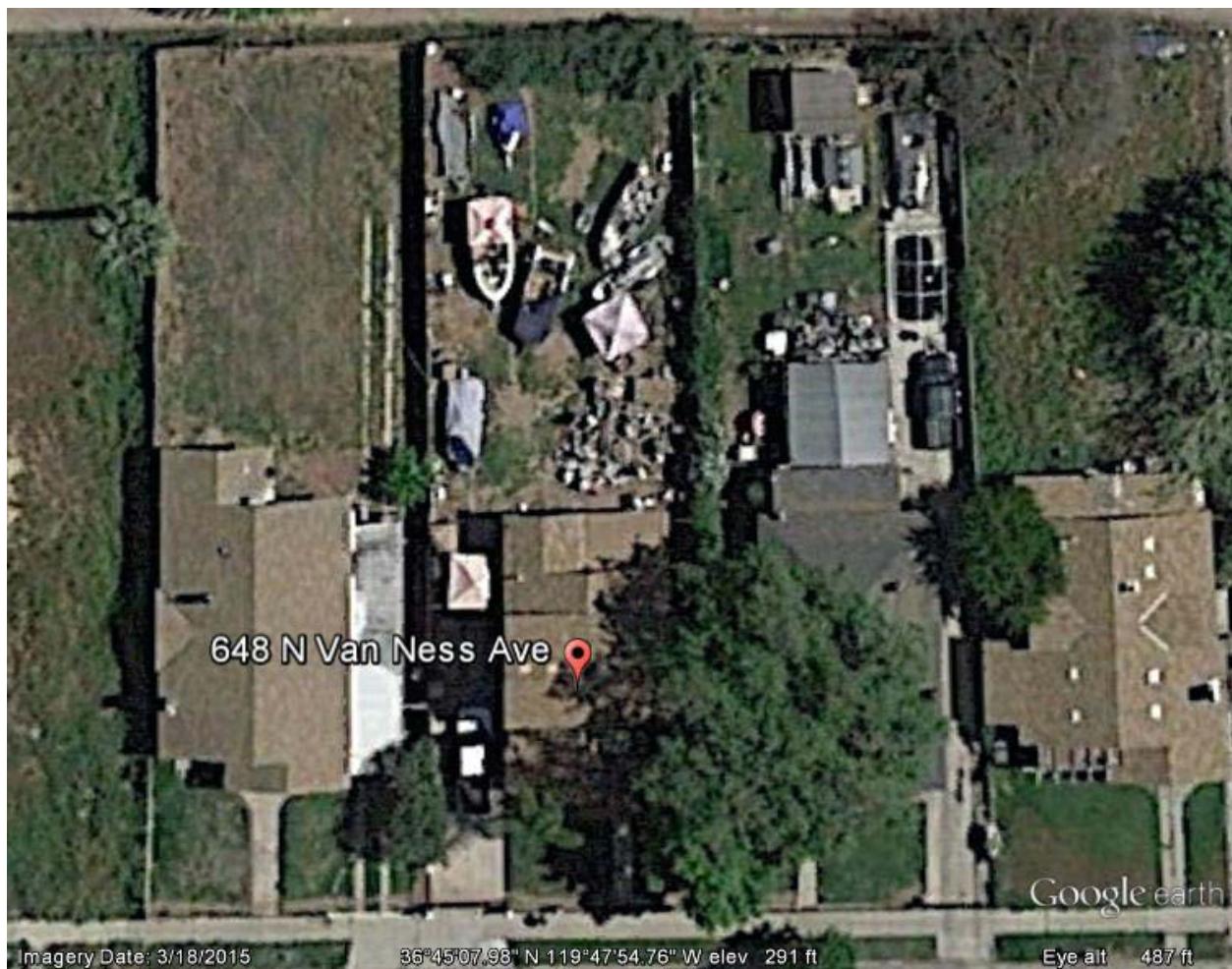


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Aerial view





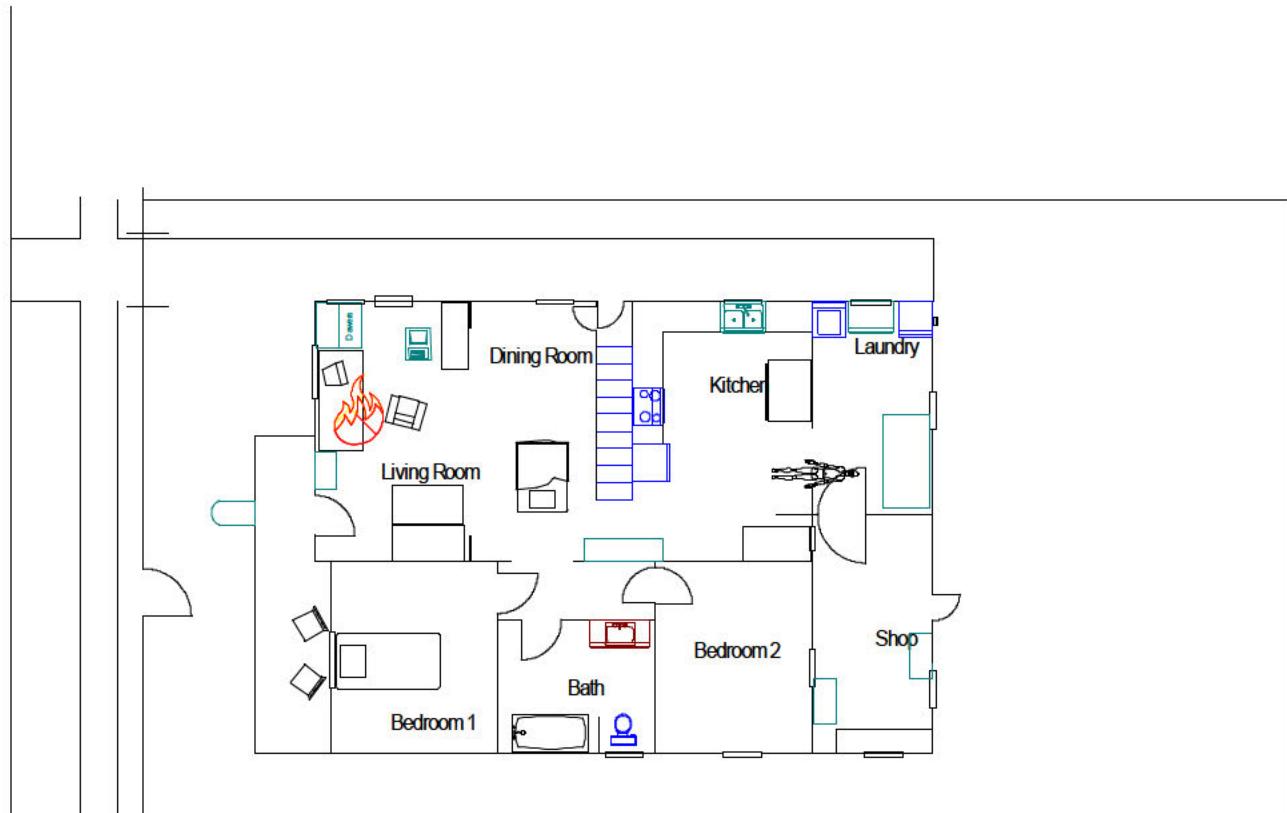
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Sketch

648 N. Van Ness Ave.



Not to Scale



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Entry/Exit Log

Prior to an Entry/Exit Log being established the FFD members below had access to the scene.

Engine 3	Palmer, Tatham, Perkins, Gonzalez
Engine 4	Fulmer, R. Garcia, Otto
Truck 4	Garnier, Sickler, Philbin, Bertrand
Engine 9	Dolan, Encizo, Alvarez
Truck 9	Martino, Gade, Roe, Allison
Battalion 1	Tuggle
Battalion 3	Talmage
I01	Perez

Entry/Exit log was initiated at approximately 1555 by BC-3 Talmage and monitored by I04 until a FPD uniformed patrol officer arrived to maintain the log after approximately 1711 hours.

1555 Perez entry
1600 Wilding entry
1607 Wilding exit
1608 Perez exit

1610 Gonzalez entry
1610 Perez entry
1612 Gonzalez exit
1615 Perez exit

1644 Perez entry
1644 Wilding entry
1644 Bowlan entry
1644 Rivera entry
1644 Dodd entry
1644 Farrah entry
1644 Tracy entry

1651 Palmer entry
1654 Palmer exit

1706 Gonzalez entry
1706 Perkins entry
1711 Gonzalez exit
1711 Perkins exit

After 1711 hours the responsibility for the entry/exit log was transferred to a FPD patrol officer.



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CONCLUSION

On Saturday, January 20, 2016 at approximately 1511 hours, a full residential first alarm assignment from the Fresno Fire Department responded to 648 N. Van Ness Ave. First arriving fire units found smoke and fire in the front room of a two story, single-family residence. The residence was extraordinarily barricaded, from within the structure, which delayed rescue and suppression efforts. A victim was located and extricated from within the structure. The victim succumbed to [REDACTED] and was pronounced at the emergency department at CRMC. The origin of the fire was the front living room along the A-side wall. The fire cause was determined to be incendiary.

DISPOSITION

1. Area canvassed
2. Witnesses interviewed

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Emergency Personnel Who Can Testify

Last, First Name
Wilding, Lee
Perez, RJ

Badge/Employee #
#F634
#F363

Agency Name
Fresno Fire Department
Fresno Fire Department

END OF REPORT



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LOCATION: 648 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno, CA, 93728
VICTIM: [REDACTED]
REPORTING OFFICER: Wilding, Lee #F634
REPORT #: 16-003909.LW.11

SYNOPSIS

This report documents my actions related to an occupied residential fire investigation. The fire caused moderate fire damage. There was one fatality, related to this fire incident, identified at the time of this report. The classification of this fire is incendiary. No suspects have been identified at the time of this report.

SOURCE OF ACTIVITY

On 1/20/16 at approximately 1511 hours FFD communications received a 911 telephone call reporting a fire at 648 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno City, Fresno County. At approximately 1537 hours I was assigned to this incident to assist with the investigation. I responded code-2 and arrived on scene at approximately 1542 hours.

INVESTIGATION

Initial Observations/Actions

Upon arrival I observed multiple fire apparatus in front of a single story residential structure. The fire had been fully extinguished prior to my arrival and there were no smoke or flames visible. The fire crews were standing by awaiting completion of the fire origin and cause investigation. I made contact with the incident commander, Battalion Chief 01 (BC-01) Tuggle #07297. BC-01 Tuffle briefed me on the details known to him at that time. BC-01 Tuffle advised that the fire had been extinguished and one adult victim, later identified as [REDACTED] was found during the search. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was transported to CRMC. After the fire had been extinguished, and [REDACTED] was extricated, the residence was secured for the investigation.

Due to the possibility of this being a fatality incident, and the reported [REDACTED], I contacted FPD dispatch and requested FPD Homicide respond to the scene.

I then asked BC-01 to assign somebody to do an entry/exit log, of all personnel entering and exiting the incident property, and to identify all persons who have been inside the residence since arrival.



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BC-03 Talmage #00507 was assigned this task. BC-03 was later assigned to another incident and the entry/exit log was then transferred to Investigator Tracy #685, who was also on scene assisting with the investigation. Refer to Investigator Tracy's report (16-003909.JT.15) for a summary of this log.

Shortly after arrival on scene I had opened the laundry room window, on the east side of the laundry room (See Investigator Tracy sketch, 16-003909.JT.15) to aid in the removal of residual smoke. This window was in the closed and locked position prior to me opening it. After the fire had been completely extinguished and the windows opened for smoke removal, no further investigation of the scene was completed until FPD Homicide detective's arrived.

FPD Homicide Detective's Rivera #P1146 and Dodd #P280 responded to the scene. Upon arrival Detective Rivera advised he was going to have a search warrant authored prior to processing the scene. Detective Rivera asked that, in order to preserve the integrity of the scene we hold off on the fire origin and cause investigation until after the search warrant had been approved. I advised Detective Rivera that part of the fire origin and cause investigation includes running an ignitable liquid detection K-9 through the scene to sniff the scene for the possible presence of ignitable liquids. Due to the perishable nature of ignitable liquid evidence, I needed to use the K-9 to sniff the scene immediately for the possible presence of ignitable liquids.

1. Ignitable Liquid Detection K-9 Use

- a) I then used Ignitable Liquid Detector K-9 TESSA to sniff the involved property. TESSA is trained to detect and alert to the presence of ignitable liquids. If an ignitable liquid is detected, TESSA will make an alert. This includes sitting or lying on the floor and pointing to the source using her nose.
- b) I walked the property and structure, noting any safety concerns and identifying locations to be sniffed. I then directed TESSA to sniff the identified areas.
- c) TESSA began the sniff in the front yard. There was some burned debris which had been moved out onto the front lawn, from the interior of the living room where the fire had occurred. These items had been removed during suppression of the fire. The items included some burned carpet and carpet padding along with paper items such as magazines and books.
- d) I directed TESSA to sniff the burned debris in the front yard. While sniffing the debris TESSA mad a final alert, sitting down and directing her nose to a piece of the burned carpet which was within the burned debris. This location was marked and later collected as evidence item #1. TESSA did not make any final alerts to any of the other portions of fire debris in the front yard.
- e) I then directed TESSA to sniff the interior of the structure. TESSA and I began the interior sniff at the front entryway door, located on the "A" side (west side) of the structure. The front entryway door accessed the living room of the residence. This fire had originated in the area of the northwest corner of the living room. The fire damage was mostly confined to that area (Northwest corner). The fire damage extended to the location of the front door



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on the west wall.

- f) As TESSA began sniffing the entryway she took approximately 3-4 steps into the living room and made a final alert. She sat down and pointed her nose to some red plastic which was setting on the floor near the doorway. The red plastic was the remnants of a plastic gas can which had partially melted. This was marked and later identified as evidence item #2. TESSA continued to sniff north, along the west wall of the living room. While sniffing the floor moving north TESSA made two more final alerts, sitting down and directing her nose to the floor at those locations. The locations were marked and later collected as evidence items #3 and #4. (See sketch below for the approximately location of each evidence location.)
- g) TESSA and I then worked our way around the house, systematically in a clockwise fashion. TESSA did not make any additional final alerts.
- h) After the sniff was complete, samples of fire debris were taken from the location of each final alert. While collecting each sample I detected a strong odor of gasoline emitting from those locations. A new set of collection gloves and a new razor blade was used during the removal of each evidence sample.
- i) While collecting the sample from the carpet located in the front yard (Evidence item #1) I observed a red long neck lighter to be melted into the carpet which TESSA had alerted too. This lighter was removed from the carpet sample (Evidence item #1) and placed into evidence as evidence item #5.
- j) I then used K-9 TESSA to sniff a section of sidewalk along Van Ness, approximately 20 feet in length. TESSA did not make any final alerts. I placed the evidence cans containing evidence items 1-4, in a row within the sidewalk TESSA had sniffed with negative alerts. I directed TESSA to sniff the evidence cans. TESSA mad a final alert on each of the evidence cans.

After the scene sniff was complete, the structure was vacated to await the completion of the search warrant.

At approximately 2020 hours FPD detective Rivera advised us (FFD suppression and investigation members) to clear the scene. He advised they will maintain custody of the scene until the search warrant is completed. They will contact us at that time so that we can respond back to the location.

Upon clearing the scene I transported evidence item's 1-5 to FFD HQ and booked them into evidence.

On 1/21/16 at approximately 0700 hours FFD Investigator Perez, Investigator Tracy and I were requested to respond back to the scene to complete the fire origin and cause investigation. The fire scene appeared to be the same as when we had left, and burned portion of the structure had not been disturbed. We began the scene origin and cause investigation at that time.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the fire was determined to have been intentionally caused.



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Refer to Investigator Perez' report, 16-003909.RP.Ori, for a full summary of the fire origin and cause investigation.

On 2/22/16 I attended the autopsy of [REDACTED]. Fresno County Coroner/Pathologist Dr. Chambliss performed the autopsy.

While examining [REDACTED] body I observed an extensive amount of soot in the [REDACTED]. This is consistent with [REDACTED] being alive and breathing at the time of the fire. Doctor Chambliss removed [REDACTED] tongue, trachea and lungs. There was soot visible on [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Doctor Chambliss cut open the airway, from the trachea down to the lower bronchioles of the lungs. There was soot visible throughout the [REDACTED]. This is also consistent with [REDACTED] being alive and breathing at the time of the fire.

During the autopsy Doctor Chambliss examined the [REDACTED]. Doctor Chambliss stated that the [REDACTED] only went into [REDACTED] a short distance and there was not a large amount of blood present in the chest cavity. Doctor Chambliss advised that of the [REDACTED] penetrated the [REDACTED], but only a small amount. In his opinion the [REDACTED] were possibly compatible with life.

Doctor Chambliss stated that based upon the amount of soot that was present in [REDACTED], it is probable that he died as a result of [REDACTED] rather than from the [REDACTED]. Doctor Chambliss stated he needed to wait on the blood results to be able to determine if a fatal amount of [REDACTED].

While examining [REDACTED] body I observed two areas with singed hair. I observed singed hair on the lower left leg including the top of the left foot. I also observed singed hair on the right arm and right hand. I did not observe any other singed hair (See LW.Photos 27-34).

Note: [REDACTED] was found in the area of the kitchen, which was not involved in fire. It is my opinion there is no way for [REDACTED] hair to have become singed, from the fire, at the location he was found. Based on this information it is my opinion it is probable that [REDACTED] was near the fire at some point.

On 1/26/16 I took evidence items 1-4 to California DOJ to be processed. Evidence items 1, 3 and 4 were submitted for analysis for the possible presence of ignitable liquids. Evidence item 2 was submitted for latent finger print analysis.



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Evidence

DATE	FROM	TO	ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	BIN #	INV	BADGE
1/20/16	Scene	FFD HQ	1	Fire debris & carpet		LW	F634
1/20/16	Scene	FFD HQ	2	Melted gas can		LW	F634
1/20/16	Scene	FFD HQ	3	Fire debris & carpet		LW	F634
1/20/16	Scene	FFD HQ	4	Fire debris & carpet		LW	F634
1/20/16	Scene	FFD HQ	5	Lighter found in area of fire origin	14	LW	F634
1/26/16	FFD HQ	DOJ	1	Fire debris & carpet		LW	F634
1/26/16	FFD HQ	DOJ	2	Melted gas can		LW	F634
1/26/16	FFD HQ	DOJ	3	Fire debris & carpet		LW	F634
1/26/16	FFD HQ	DOJ	4	Fire debris & carpet		LW	F634

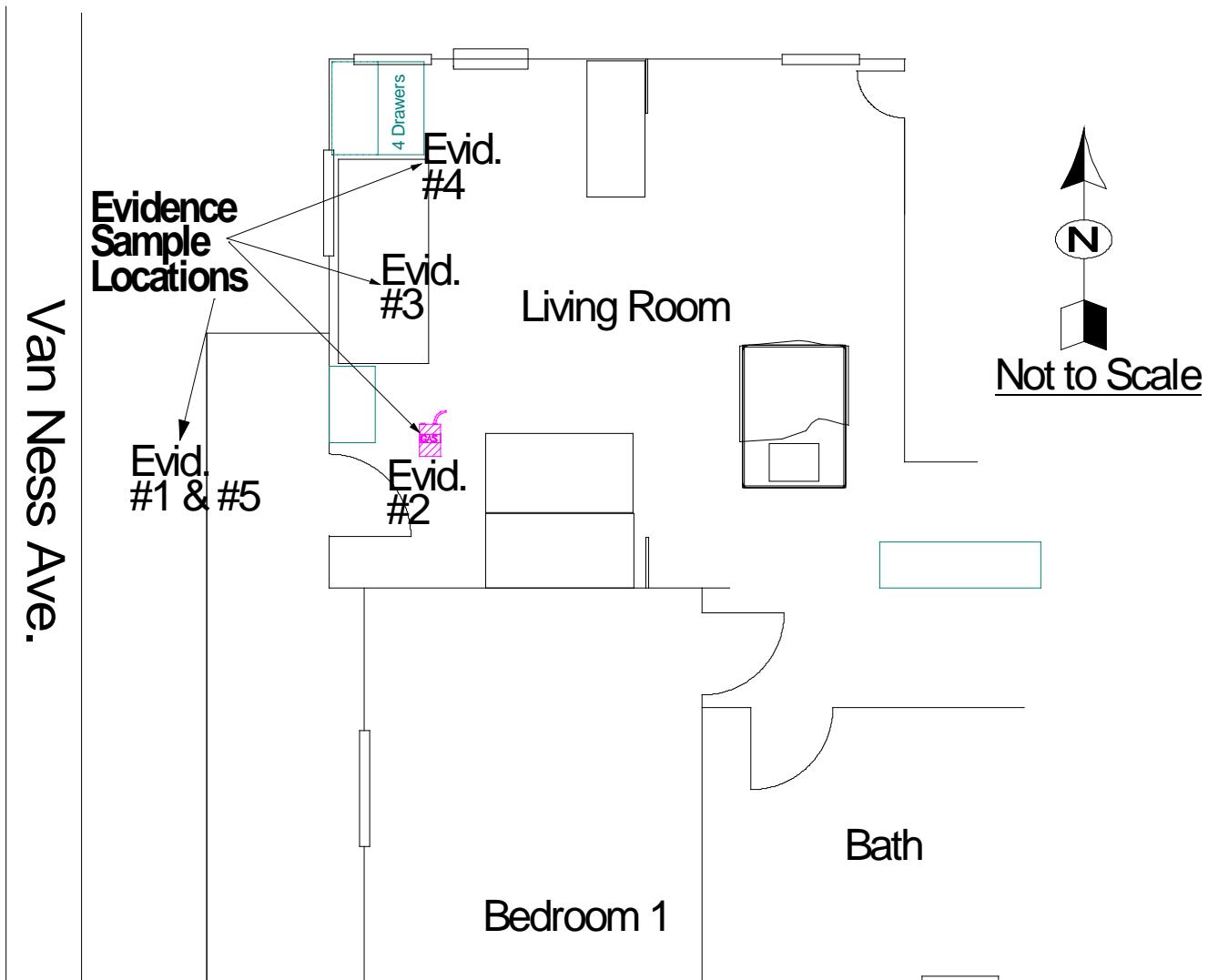


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Evidence Sketch





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Photo Journal (GV = General View)

#	DATE	LOCATION/DIRECTION	SUBJECT
<u>Fire Scene</u>			
01	1/20/16	Front yard / east	"A" side and address, GV
02	1/20/16	Front yard / southeast	Fire debris in front yard
03	1/20/16	Front yard	Fire debris in front yard, location of evidence item #1
04	1/20/16	Front yard	Fire debris in front yard, location of evidence item #1
05	1/20/16	Front yard / east	Front door, entry into living room, GV
06	1/20/16	Front yard / east	Front door, entry into living room, location of evidence item #2 (gas can)
07	1/20/16	Living room	Close up of evidence item #2 (gas can)
08	1/20/16	Living room / northwest	Location of evidence item #3
09	1/20/16	Living room / west	Location of evidence item #3
10	1/20/16	Living room / west	Location of evidence item #3
11	1/20/16	Living room / northwest	Location of evidence item #4
12	1/20/16	Living room / northwest	Location of evidence items 3 & 4
13	1/20/16	Front yard	Removal of lighter (evid. #5), found in carpet from evid. Item #1
14	1/20/16	Front yard	Evidence item #1, placed into evidence can
15	1/20/16	Front yard	Evidence item #5, placed into evidence bag
16	1/20/16	Living room	Evidence item #3, placed into evidence can
17	1/20/16	Living room	Evidence item #4 placed into evidence can
18	1/20/16	Living room	Evidence item #2 (gas can) removed

Autopsy

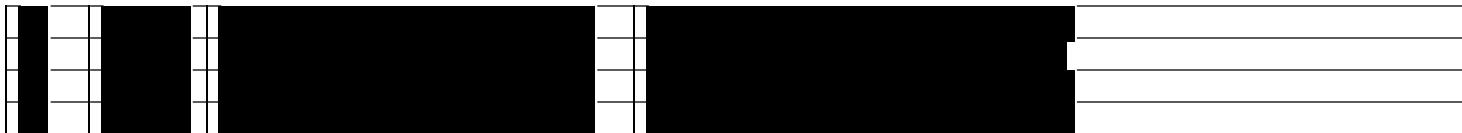
This figure is a horizontal bar chart with a black background. It features a grid of thin white lines forming a grid pattern. The chart is divided into three distinct vertical sections by thick vertical grid lines. The first section on the far left contains two very tall, solid black bars. The second section in the center contains several shorter black bars of varying widths; one bar in this section is notably longer than the others. The third section on the far right contains several black bars, with one bar being exceptionally long, extending significantly above the top of the other bars in that section.



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DISPOSITION

- Surrounding area canvassed
- Evidence booked
- Digital photographs saved to FFD Investigations electronic case file

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Emergency Personnel Who Can Testify

Last, First Name

Tracy, Jay
Perez, RJ

Badge/Employee #

F 685
F363

Agency Name

Fresno Fire Department
Fresno Fire Department

END OF REPORT



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VICTIM: [REDACTED]
REPORTING OFFICER: Dansby, Nathan #F698
REPORT #: 16-003909.ND.17

SYNOPSIS

This report documents my actions related to evidence collection from the Department of Justice (DOJ).

SOURCE OF ACTIVITY

On Monday, June 20th, 2016, I was working my normal assigned duty shift as a Fresno City Fire Investigator. At approximately 1400 hours I responded to the DOJ to pick up evidence. The following evidence has been placed in the Fresno Fire Department Headquarters (FFD HQ) secure evidence locker.

EVIDENCE DISPOSITION

DATE	FROM	TO	#	DESCRIPTION	BIN	INV	BADGE
06/20/16	DOJ	FFD HQ	1	Metal gallon can	30	Dansby, Nathan	F698
06/20/16	DOJ	FFD HQ	2	Large cardboard box	30	Dansby, Nathan	F698
06/20/16	DOJ	FFD HQ	3	Metal gallon can	30	Dansby, Nathan	F698
06/20/16	DOJ	FFD HQ	4	Metal gallon can	30	Dansby, Nathan	F698
06/20/16	DOJ	FFD HQ	C	Small manila envelope	30	Dansby, Nathan	F698

DISPOSITION

Evidence secured in the FFD HQ secure evidence locker.

END OF REPORT



Fire Department Investigations Unit
911 H Street
Fresno, California 93721-3083



Fire Investigations Unit Supervisor
Don MacAlpine, Deputy Fire Marshal
(559) 621-4440 FAX # (559) 457-1223

FIRE INVESTIGATIONS REPORT

FFD EVENT #: 16-003909
FPD CASE #: 16-004815
CLASSIFICATION: INCENDIARY
DATE: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 @ 1511 hours
LOCATION: 648 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno, CA, 93728
VICTIM: [REDACTED]
REPORTING OFFICER: Perez, R
REPORT #: 16-003909.RP.Ori

SYNOPSIS

This report documents my actions and findings related to a residential fire investigation.

The fire caused moderate fire damage.

There was one fatality identified at the time of this report.

The cause of this fire is classified as INCENDIARY.

While investigating this fire, we identified suspicious activity that lead to the involvement of Fresno Police Department, Homicide Division. We determined that our lead suspect in this case happened to be the victim.

SOURCE OF ACTIVITY

On Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at approximately 1511 hours Fresno County Dispatch received a 911 emergency call reporting a residential fire at 648 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno City in the county of Fresno. A residential fire alarm assignment responded.

First arriving fire units arrived on scene at approximately 1515 hours. Initial size-up reported people waving in Engine Company 3, light smoke showing. A working fire notification was broadcast at approximately 1515 hours.

At approximately 1528 hours a Fire Investigator response was requested.

At approximately 1531 hours, while working my normal schedule with the Fresno Fire Department as Fire Scene Investigator I01, I responded to the incident with Fresno County Dispatch. I responded code two from 3187 W. Belmont Ave., Fresno City, CA. I arrived at the fire scene at approximately 1539 hours. I cleared the fire scene at approximately 2023 hours.

OBSERVATIONS/ACTIONS

Upon my arrival I observed numerous FFD apparatus and personnel in suppression mode of a



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residential fire. I did not observe any active fire behavior. I only witnessed smoke coming from the residence.

I initially made contact with suppression Incident Commander, Battalion Chief Tuggle, T. #07297 (CHIEF TUGGLE) and advised him of my presence. CHIEF TUGGLE briefed me as to his initial findings and requested that I order additional police officers for the civilian casualty that presented late in the suppression operation.

I assisted with the fire scene origin and cause by documenting the fire scene with digital photographs and processing the area of origin.

INVESTIGATION

Methodology

The methodology I utilized during this investigation consisted of identifying all available data for origin determination including witness accounts, an initial scene assessment, development of a preliminary fire spread hypothesis, an in-depth examination of the fire scene, reconstruction of the fire scene, development of a final fire spread hypothesis, and identification of the fire's origin.

I identified all available data for cause determination including identification of ignition sources, fuel packages, oxidizers, and circumstances. I used all available resources to develop fire cause hypotheses and to determine which hypotheses fit all of the credible data available in order to determine the cause of this fire.

Circumstances in this case required the input of several investigation team members. A summary of statements can be found in Investigator Tracy, J #F685 (INV TRACY) report. Arson K9 Tessa processed the scene for accelerants. Details on her findings can be found in Investigator Wilding, L #634 (INV WILDING) report.

Scene Examination

This fire scene consists of a 2-story structure on a one-way street, Van Ness Ave. The lot was secured by a metal security gate/fence. The resident had installed several security cameras throughout the interior and exterior of the home. There was one large dog on the property.

General Construction

Building Type: Type V, residential

Square Footage: 1462 sq. ft. (Zillow.com)

Foundation: Flush with crawl space.

Exterior Siding: Wood

Roof: Gable with comp shingles.



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Systematic Approach

I began processing the scene by systematically walking through the entire scene, from exterior to interior identifying all available data relevant to determining where and how the fire started.

I walked through the exterior in a clockwise fashion, noting: visible exterior damage; condition/security of the doors and windows; condition of exterior electrical wires; condition of utilities including gas meter, electrical meter, and electrical panel; and any other pertinent data pertaining to the fire scene.

I then systematically and methodically walked through the interior of the structure. I walked through each of the rooms and storage spaces, noting: the condition of the spaces, the contents, housekeeping, indicators of maintenance, and any type of construction, interior finishes and all furnishings/fuel load. I searched for fire, smoke, and heat damage to each room and in each room any indicators of fire travel and/or origin.

Exterior

"A" Side

The "A" side faces west, toward the street. The front entry door is located on this side.

"B" Side

The "B" side faces north and has a side entrance next to the driveway.

"C" Side

The "C" side faces east and has a rear entry door.

"D" Side

The "D" side faces south.

Interior

I entered the structure through the A side entrance door. I walked through each of the rooms and storage spaces, noting: the condition of the spaces, the contents, housekeeping, indicators of maintenance, and any type of construction, interior finishes and all furnishings/fuel load. I searched for fire, smoke, and heat damage to each room and in each room any indicators of fire travel and/or origin.

Alarm/Smoke Detector/Protection/Security

I looked for a smoke detector in the house. I did not recognize one with certainty. There was no smoke detector sounding at the time of my examination.

Living Room

I observed this room to be the area of origin. There were several computers and at least two



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monitors in the room. They appeared to be connected to the victim's surveillance equipment. The fuel load did not fit the normal furniture arrangement I would expect for a living room. There was office equipment, exercise equipment and automotive repair equipment in the room and also a mattress on the floor.

Note: All entry doors and windows were secured with plywood, 2x4's or metal screens from the inside, to prevent anyone from entering. Fire crews could not make access through the doors until a chainsaw was used to cut the doors.

Kitchen

I observed this room to have normal kitchen items. But, it also had a medium duty, metal shelf containing more mechanics tools and a table with boxes of inventory for auto or marine use. This room was stained from smoke residue.

Note: The exterior window in the kitchen was also partially obstructed by a 2x6 piece of lumber.

Behind the kitchen was another room, which appeared to be the laundry room. It also contained metal shelving with surveillance equipment and several more tools. This room is where the victim was found by fire crews. The victim was removed and taken to the front yard, where resuscitation efforts began. This room had some smoke staining on the walls.

Note: The windows and exterior door to this room was also secured shut with lumber.

Bedroom #1

I observed this room to be the only room in the house that was not filled with some type of clutter. It was a [REDACTED] bedroom. I later found out that this room belonged to the [REDACTED] who occasionally stayed with him. This room suffered only smoke damage.

Note: This room, too, had the windows secured by plywood.

Bedroom #2

This room was blocked by high piled storage boxes. It was also secured by lumber to prevent access in or out.

Other Rooms

The B side entrance led to an unfinished stairwell upstairs. The entire upstairs was unfinished and appeared to be under construction. There were several contractor grade tools and equipment up there, including lumber. Fire and smoke travel to the upstairs was blocked by a locked door which was also secured by lumber across the frame.



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Area of Origin (AOO)

After careful consideration that all credible data has been accounted for and all credible alternate origin hypotheses have been considered and eliminated it is of my opinion that the area of origin is limited to the living room along the A side wall.

AOO Fire patterns

Fire patterns were heaviest on the westernmost part of the room, along the wall of the front entrance, the A side. Items consumed by fire were a bookshelf with books, a table with computers and other electrical equipment, including TV/computer monitors and a file cabinet. The fire patterns displayed signs of multiple origins, consistent with a flammable liquid accelerated fire.

Note: Fire crews stated that while knocking down the fire, the fire kept re-igniting after spraying water on it. Helmet cam footage shows this clearly. This is consistent fire behavior when a liquid accelerator is present.

AOO "A" Side

During my investigation, I found a V-pattern between the front door and book shelf and fire patterns under the burned table. This is indicative of liquid accelerants igniting in a broad area. Ceiling patterns displayed signs of high heat in this area.

Note: A burned gasoline container was found near the bookshelf. It still contained small amounts of liquid gasoline.

AOO "A-B" Corner

This corner is where the file cabinet was located. After moving the file cabinet and observing the wall and floorboard behind it, it revealed burn patters and char. In a natural fire setting, this area would have been protected by the file cabinet and should not have displayed burn patterns.

AOO "B" Side

I observed a V-pattern along this wall by the file cabinet and fireplace. I located electrical outlets on this wall, however, the V-pattern did not begin at that location. The electrical cords that were plugged in were consumed by the fire below it.

AOO "D-A" Corner

The front door was near the D/A corner. There were no significant burn patterns here. Only signs of high heat as displayed by melted plastic switches.

AOO Ceiling

The entire ceiling in the living room displayed signs of high heat. The fire was kept in place by the drywall ceiling.



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AOO Floor

The floor along the A side wall displayed charring along a definitive path. The carpet displayed charring and the wood floor beneath the carpet was protected.

AOO Doors

The front door was secured with lumber in the locked position. The door was destroyed during access by fire crews.

AOO Windows

Smoke stains on the windows means the windows were closed during the fire. The window was covered by a steel or metal type screen.

AOO Competent Ignition Sources

There were several electronic components in the area of origin. There were also several burn patterns that did not correlate with the electrical components being the source of ignition in this room. This fire demonstrated fire behavior consistent with vapors burning from liquid accelerants. A gasoline can and burned lighter in the AOO were found.

AOO Fuel Load

A bookshelf loaded with books and electronics in a carpeted room were the primary fuel loads. These were assisted by liquid accelerants.

AOO Ventilation

Natural air in the house supported the fire for a short time. It appears that the fire may have reached a smoldering state and then re-ignited with the introduction of air as fire crews breached the doors.

AOO Evidence

A gasoline can and lighter were found in the AOO. The AOO was also tested by arson K9 Tessa. See INV WILDING'S report for details.

Fire Cause

Ignition source: A portable ignition source, such as the lighter that was found in the AOO.

Material first ignited: Vapors from poured gasoline.

Oxidant: Air and gas.

Event: A flammable liquid was poured onto common combustibles with the willful intention of igniting the house on fire.



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PHOTO JOURNAL

#	DATE	LOCATION/DIRECTION	SUBJECT
01	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the A side with address visible.
02	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the B side where resuscitation efforts took place on the victim.
03	1/20/16	Facing SE	General view of the A/B corner. Exterior of AOO.
04	1/20/16	Facing SE	General view of the B side with door access. Crawlspace access.
05	1/20/16	Facing S	General view of the B side, second floor.
06	1/20/16	Facing S	General view of the stairwell from B side.
07	1/20/16	Facing SW	General view of the living room from B side access door.
08	1/20/16	Facing S	General view of the C side. Electrical box visible.
09	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the electrical box.
10	1/20/16	Facing W	General view of the D side. Gas cans in the forefront. Victim had gas cans for his motorized equipment.
11	1/20/16	Facing N	General view of the A side front door. Fire crews cut the door with a chainsaw to make access into the structure.
12	1/20/16	Facing W	General view of the AOO. Bookshelf and table.
13	1/20/16	Facing W	General view of the ceiling above bookshelf and window.
14	1/20/16	Facing N	General view of the B side wall. AOO.
15	1/20/16	Facing N	General view of the ceiling of living room.
16	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the AOO. Red gas can visible amidst the fire debris.
17	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the AOO floor.
18	1/20/16	Facing NE	General view of the back of living room. B/C corner.
19	1/20/16	Facing SE	General view of the C/D corner of living room.
20	1/20/16	Facing SW	General view of the D/A corner of living room.
21	1/20/16	Facing SE	General view of the C/D ceiling of living room.
22	1/20/16	Facing SW	General view of the D/A ceiling of living room.
23	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the exercise equipment in the living room. Note: there was an antique looking sewing machine in front of the door that hindered firefighters access into the room.
24	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the mattress in living room. Notice smoke level on the back wall.
25	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the plywood covering the window on the B side.
26	1/20/16	Facing SE	General view of the metal shelf leading into kitchen. Hall to bedroom#1 and bathroom on the right.
27	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the hallway entrance.
28	1/20/16	Facing SE	General view of the boxes blocking bedroom #2.
29	1/20/16	Facing W	General view of the bedroom #1
30	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the mattress in living room.
31	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the access to the kitchen.
32	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the kitchen
33	1/20/16	Facing N	General view of the kitchen.
34	1/20/16	Facing E	General view of the rear of kitchen leading to laundry room.
35	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the laundry room.
36	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the rear door/exit from laundry room.
37	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the laundry room where victim was found.
38	1/20/16	Facing S	General view of the laundry room exit leading to storage room on the C side.
39	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the cell phone next to the mattress in living room.



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40	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the stairwell to the second floor.
41	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the storage supplies on the second floor.
42	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the storage supplies on the second floor.
43	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the storage supplies on the second floor.
44	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the storage supplies on the second floor.
45	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the storage supplies on the second floor.
46	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the access view down into room #2.
47	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the access view down into room #2.
48	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the second floor.
49	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the second floor.
50	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the security camera on the A side.
51	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the B side security camera near the front.
52	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the B side camera at the rear.
53	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the B side camera at the rear.
54	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the C side camera.
55	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the B side access.
56	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the B side access.
57	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the 2x4 broken off of the B side access door.
58	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the window on B side. Plywood was pulled away during the fire.
59	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the plywood on the B side.
60	1/20/16	Facing	General view of another view of the plywood.
61	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the broken hinge of rear doorway at rear of living room.
62	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the broken hinge of rear doorway at rear of living room.
63	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the wall between front door and bookshelf. A side.
64	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the D/A corner, front door.
65	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the rear door in laundry room. Broken while trying to breach the door.
66	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the wall at rear door.
67	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the rear door of laundry room. Closed in position during fire.
68	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the window in laundry room.
69	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the surveillance equipment in laundry room.
70	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the D side wall in living room. Clean electric outlets.
71	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the D side wall in living room. Melted switches. Chest level.
72	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the electrical outlet on A side wall, under the table.
73	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the debris under the table in AOO. Probably table contents. Burned computer on the right.
74	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the burned debris in AOO.
75	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the outlet on opposite side of fireplace. B side wall.
76	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the fireplace.
77	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the burn pattern next to fireplace. B side.
78	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the monitor with camera in A/B corner.
79	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the outlet and monitor on the B wall.
80	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the computer or video equipment in AOO. One computer removed.
81	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the rear of computer or video equipment.
82	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the burned computer under table in AOO.



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83	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the rear of burned computer under the table. AOO.
84	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the rear of burned computer under the table. AOO.
85	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the AOO, computer under table removed.
86	1/20/16	Facing W	General view of the front door and bookshelf.
87	1/20/16	Facing W	General view of the A side, interior.
88	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the A/B corner, interior.
89	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the A/B side, interior.
90	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the B side, interior.
91	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the B/C corner, interior.
92	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room.
93	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
94	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
95	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
96	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
97	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the victim's ID (copy).
98	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the top cabinet of file cabinet.
99	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
100	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
101	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
102	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
103	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
104	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
105	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
106	1/20/16	1/20/16	Close up view of the area behind the file cabinet.
107	1/20/16	Facing	General view of the floor in living room. AOO. Bookshelf removed. Image on wall?
108	1/20/16	1/20/16	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
109	1/20/16	1/20/16	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
110	1/20/16	1/20/16	General view of the floor in living room. AOO.
111	1/20/16	1/20/16	General view of the top of the cabinet.
112	1/20/16	1/20/16	General view of the file cabinet.

EXPOSURES

1. Actual exposures: The victim inside.
2. Potential exposures: The rear of house and upper floor.

NUMBER OF FATALITIES AND/OR INJURIES: The victim suffered fatally from [REDACTED].

WEATHER

1. www.wunderground.com

DATE	TIME	TEMP. F	WIND SPEED	WIND DIRECTION	HUMIDITY %	CONDITIONS
1/20/16	1453	60.1	8.1	West	78%	Mostly cloudy
1/20/16	1753	52.0	6.9	West	78%	Mostly cloudy



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CONCLUSION

Summary of Incident

A fire occurred at a residential structure. The resident of the home suffered fatally in the fire. The first arriving engine company arrived within a minute of their assignment, as they were leaving a medical aid call just five doors down. The fire was reported through 911 by a witness who saw flames in the window of the home. Fire crews were slowed in their access to the interior of the home due to extensive security measures taken by the homeowner. In addition to the locked security gate outside, all of the doors were secured with lumber from the inside and windows were covered by wood or metal from the inside. Fire crews eventually made access with a chainsaw. Shortly after relaying negative on the primary search, crews reported a victim with [REDACTED] and extricated the victim to the front driveway where resuscitation efforts took place before transporting the victim to the hospital.

Fresno Police Department detectives were called in to investigate due to the nature of death of the victim.

Classification of the Cause

Incendiary:

My opinion of the origin and cause of this fire is based on the following:

1. My more than 18 years of professional service in the firefighting industry.
2. I have personally conducted and/or assisted in over 70 fire events.
3. I have over 400 hours of fire investigation and related law enforcement training.
4. I investigated this fire scene by conducting a scientific method-based investigation.
5. The fire patterns identified as detailed in this report.
6. The presence of an accelerant as detailed in this report.
7. The lack of identifiable sources of a natural event or accidental fire.

It is also my opinion that the person responsible for this fire is also the victim, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] My opinion that [REDACTED] is responsible for the fire cause is based on the following:

Motive:

[REDACTED] actually predicted harm unto him on social media.

Opportunity:

There was no possible way someone could have entered or exited the home during the fire. [REDACTED] was the only person inside with no way out.

Ability/Means:

[REDACTED] had access to the supplies needed to start the fire.

Evidence

- a) Physical- gasoline can and lighter found in the AOO.
- b) Documentary- [REDACTED] posted on social media his negative views on the Fresno Police Department and actually predicted something bad would happen to him. He used a YouTube account to document his conspiracy theories. Helmet cam video and photos



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taken at scene support my hypothesis.
c) Testimonial- Witness statements given support our findings.

DISPOSITION

1. Digital photographs and audio recordings saved to FFD Investigations electronic case file
2. Processing and preservation of evidence.
3. Area canvassed for witnesses.
4. Status of suspect/victim is deceased.
5. Notification of Fresno Police Detectives for homicide investigation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Emergency Personnel Who Can Testify

• Wilding, L	F634	FFD Investigations
• Tracy, J	F685	FFD Investigations
• MacAlpine, D	F303	FFD Investigations
• Captain Palmer	#04174	Fresno Fire Dept.
• Acting Capt. Perkins	#09365	Fresno Fire Dept.

END OF REPORT



**MARGARET MIMS
SHERIFF-CORONER
3333 E. American Avenue, Suite G
Fresno, CA 93725**

Fresno Coroner Case # 16-01.222

**INVESTIGATION
Upon the Body of**

Before

Loretta Andrews, Deputy Coroner

At

Community Regional Medical Center
2823 Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93721

On

January 20, 2016



MARGARET MIMS, SHERIFF-CORONER
CORONER CERTIFICATE & VERDICT
3333 E. American Avenue, Suite G
Fresno, CA 93725

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,)
) ss.
County of Fresno)

IN THE MATTER RE THE DEATH OF:

[REDACTED] Deceased

I, MARGARET MIMS, Sheriff-Coroner of the County of Fresno, State of California, certify an inquiry and investigation was held into the death of [REDACTED] a 51 years old Male, born in Ohio. The inquiry and investigation revealed that the decedent died on the 20TH day of January, 2016, at 2823 Fresno Street in Fresno as follows:

MANNER OF DEATH: SUICIDE

CAUSE OF DEATH: INHALATION OF SMOKE AND SOOT due to FIRE
 With multiple stab wounds as a contributing factor.

Sustained following INJURIES FROM A HOUSE FIRE. The incident occurred at 648 N Van Ness in Fresno at an unknown hour on January 20, 2016. I certify that death occurred from the cause and in the manner stated above in accordance with the written findings contained herein.

Signed this 18TH day of May 2016

MARGARET MIMS, SHERIFF-CORONER

Lt. M. Padilla

By: Lt. Mark Padilla, Commander

FRESNO SHERIFF - CORONER - AUTOPSY REPORT

Case: 16-01.222
Name: [REDACTED]
Age: 51-year-old male
Date of Death: 01/20/2016; 1548 hours
Date Performed: 01/21/2016; 1240 hours
Performed At: Fresno County Morgue
Performed By: Michael J. Chambliss, M.D.
Permission for Autopsy: Loretta Andrews, Deputy Coroner
Present at Autopsy: Detective Tony Rivera, Fresno Police Department
Detective Ken Dodd, Fresno Police Department
Lee Wilding, Fire Investigator, Fresno Fire
Department
Cathy Ens, I. Bureau Technician, Fresno Police
Department

SCENE INVESTIGATION:

Deputy Coroner Loretta Andrews responded to the hospital emergency room to gather information and examine the body (see her report for details).

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND EVIDENCE COLLECTION:

Photographs are taken at the autopsy by Dr. Chambliss and Cathy Ens for identification purposes plus documentation of pathology and evidence of injury.

The body is received in a white body bag. A cut black short sleeve cotton T-shirt and cut blue jeans are noted beneath the body inside the body bag. These were removed and examined on a separate table. No tears are noted in the black T-shirt which would correspond to stab wounds on the body. Brown paper bags cover the hands secured by tape.

Two knives were brought to the autopsy by Fresno Police for me to examine before starting the autopsy.

One is a Japanese kitchen knife (Santoku-style) with a Granton edge. This knife has a point measuring 3/4" in width and tip of the knife (first third of the blade) measuring 1" in width. The maximum width of this knife near the heel of the blade is 1-3/4". The knife has a black handle measuring 4-1/2" in length and the overall blade length is 7".

The second knife is a serrated bread knife with the point measuring less than 1/2" in width leading to a tip (first third of blade) measuring 1/2" in width. The maximum width of the blade at the heel measuring 1". The knife has a black handle measuring 5" in length and the blade measures 10" in length. It again has a serrated edge.

When comparing the knives with the appearance of the stab wounds, depth of the wounds, the injury to the sternum and front of the heart, the serrated bread knife could produce all three wounds without difficulty. The size of the lowest stab wound and associated internal wound course is inconsistent with the dimensions of the Japanese kitchen knife.

PERSONAL EFFECTS:

The body is received unclothed and has multiple sites of attempted medical treatment. Soot is present over the face along the upper lip near the nostrils, the top and bottom of the feet plus the hands. No thermal burns are seen. No personal effects accompany the body.

IDENTIFICATION:

The subject is a well-developed, well-nourished adult Caucasian male weighing 167 pounds and measuring 68" in length. He appears to be the recorded age of 51 years. Moderate to well-developed rigor mortis is noted equally in the arms, legs and neck region. Postmortem lividity is evident in the back surface of the body except in the areas of blanching.

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

Soot is present over the face, the top and bottom of the feet and the hands. No additional areas of soot are noted on the arms, torso or rest of the legs.

The left anterior chest has three penetrating stab wounds which actually perforate through the anterior chest wall. The breasts are normal male. No additional injuries are noted to the chest region. Signs of medical treatment are noted. The abdomen is flat, soft and depressible in all areas. No injuries or scars are seen.

Soot is noted over the hands. The nails are short and dirty. The arms have normal symmetrical muscle development without injuries.

The external genitalia show a normal circumcised penis and the testicles are normally situated. The genitalia is unremarkable.

All toes are present where prominent soot is noted over the top and bottom of the feet. The nails are short to medium length. The legs have symmetrical normal muscle development and no injuries are noted.

The back surface of the body has lividity without additional findings.

TATTOOS:

None.

SCARS:

None.

EVIDENCE OF INJURY:

I. MULTIPLE STAB WOUNDS OF THE CHEST (TOTAL OF THREE).

There are three stab wounds on the left anterior chest between the breast and the sternum. The wounds are located between 50" and 52-1/2" from the left heel and from the midline out to 2" left. The wounds all perforate the anterior chest wall. They range in size from 1/2" in length up to 1-3/4" in length. The two smaller wounds are roughly 1/8" in width with the largest wound over 1/2" in width.

A. STAB WOUND # 1 (TOP): One (1) inch x 1/8 inch width

This wound is slightly angulated with a sharp end and a somewhat blunted opposite end. There is noticeable bruising of the skin around the wound with moderate tension of the skin so that the opening gaps slightly. No hilt abrasion is seen.

LOCATION: 52-1/2" from the left heel in the midline.

WOUND COURSE: perforates the sternum at the left fourth rib level, perforates the anterior surface of the pericardial sac and perforates the upper front of the right ventricle of the heart. The heart wound is linear and measures less than 1/4". The inside of the heart is free of injury. The pericardial sac contains less than 50 ml of liquid blood.

DIRECTION: Front to back, slight midline to left and essentially horizontal.

B. STAB WOUND #2 (MIDDLE): 1-3/4" x over 1/4" width

This wound has a slightly horizontal orientation with the sharp end near the sternum and the opposite end blunted. The skin near the sharp end has minimal bruising.

LOCATION: 50-1/2" from the left heel and 2" left of midline.

WOUND COURSE: perforates the sternum at the junction of the left fifth rib, produces a pinpoint hole in the front of the pericardial sac before creating a superficial scrape over the front of the lower right ventricle (heart). The wound does not enter the heart and measures less than 1/8" in maximum size.

DIRECTION: Front to back, midline to the left and slightly downward.

C. STAB WOUND #3 (LOWEST): 1/2" long x 1/8" width

The wound has a sharp angle (estimated 70-80 degree) with bruising of the surrounding skin. The lower end appears sharp with an opposite blunted end.

LOCATION: 50" from the left heel in the midline.

WOUND COURSE: skin, soft tissues and muscles of the front of the chest before penetrating the front of the sternum near the 5th rib. It does not go completely through the sternum.

DIRECTION: Front to back almost directly.

In summary, two of the stab wounds enter the anterior chest region by perforating the front of the sternum with only one perforating the anterior wall of the right ventricle. A small amount of blood is present in the sac surrounding the heart.

When opening the thoracic cavity, 900-1000cc of liquid blood is noted with a collapsed left lung. There are bilateral anterior rib fractures plus sternal fractures associated with the resuscitation process. Some blood in the cavity is from resuscitation.

II. FINDINGS CONSISTENT WITH SMOKE INHALATION:

1. Soot is noted over the skin of the upper lip near the nostrils.
2. Soot covers the tongue and the mucosa of the larynx with mild redness of the epiglottic mucosa.

3. Soot is noted over the mucosa of the middle to lower segments of the trachea extending into both main and proximal bronchi of the lungs.
4. An autopsy blood sample was sent to check for the presence of carbon monoxide. The carbon monoxide level was elevated to 31% saturation.

EVIDENCE OF ATTEMPTED MEDICAL TREATMENT:

1. The anterior ribcage has multiple bilateral fractures; left side greater than right. These rib fractures are associated with blood in the left thoracic cavity as stated above. The right thoracic cavity is empty.
2. The resuscitation process fractured the sternum in two locations; one is at the junction of the left fifth rib where the second stab wound is located.
3. An endotracheal tube is noted in the mouth.
4. A chest tube is in place on the right side.
5. Multiple gauze bandages and tape cover the three chest stab wounds.
6. An intraosseous infusion apparatus is in place in the lower right leg below the knee.
7. A soft tip subcutaneous catheter (ostomy) is located in the left lower lateral chest wall.
8. A needle puncture site is seen in the left elbow crease with an IV line in place.
9. A white hospital identification band is present on the left wrist.

INTERNAL EXAMINATION:

The usual autopsy incision is made. Areas of hemorrhage surround the stab wounds of the anterior chest wall.

BODY CAVITIES: (See **EVIDENCE OF INJURY**). The left thoracic cavity contains liquid blood as previously stated. The right thoracic cavity and the abdominal cavity show no blood. The left lung is collapsed. The right lung is well expanded. Both leaflets of the diaphragm are intact. All organs are normally situated.

NECK ORGANS: (Findings consistent with smoke inhalation).

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM: The lungs have a dark pink to light red appearance with no injuries seen. Soot is present in the main and bilateral middle bronchi. The pulmonary arteries and veins are normal. The parenchyma is fairly well preserved.

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM: (See **EVIDENCE OF INJURY**). The heart has injuries of the right ventricle. A small amount of blood is seen in the pericardial sac. The chambers of the heart are normal size. The aorta is normal. The valves are normal.

HEPATOBILIARY SYSTEM: The liver has a diffuse brown appearance without injuries or significant findings. The gallbladder and biliary tract are normal.

HEMOLYMPHATIC SYSTEM: The spleen is normal. No lymphadenopathy is seen.

GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM: The esophagus is normal. The stomach contains less than 100 mL of brown liquid with a normal mucosa. The gastric contents are saved. The small and large intestines are normal. The appendix is normal.

GENITOURINARY SYSTEM: The kidneys are normal size with a small solitary cortical cyst of the right kidney which is benign. The kidneys otherwise have a similar appearance. The urinary bladder is empty with a normal bladder mucosa. The prostate gland is normal.

MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM: (See EVIDENCE OF INJURY) The anterior sternum shows three stab wounds. The thoracic spine shows scoliosis. No additional significant skeletal injuries or findings are seen.

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM: The scalp and skull are normal. No subdural or epidural blood is seen. The brain shows no injury. The meninges are transparent. The floor of the skull is normal. Cut surfaces of the brain show normal gray and white matter.

ORGAN WEIGHTS:

Heart = 426 gm.	Liver = 1322 gm.	Spleen = 139 gm.
Right lung = 434 gm.	Right kidney = 166 gm.	Pancreas = 169 gm.
Left lung = 193 gm.	Left kidney = 178 gm.	Brain = 1399 gm.

MATERIALS SAVED FOR PATHOLOGY:

Representative tissue sections of the internal organs are taken and saved.

MATERIALS SAVED FOR TOXICOLOGY:

Blood, vitreous humor and gastric contents. A separate tube of blood is sent off to test for carbon monoxide. Additional samples of blood are saved in the morgue freezer.

PATHOLOGIC DIAGNOSES:

1. Findings consistent with smoke inhalation:
 - a. Soot is present along the upper lip adjacent to the nostrils.
 - b. Soot is present over the tongue and mucosa of the larynx with mild redness of the epiglottic mucosa.
 - c. Soot covers the mucosa of the middle to lower segments of the trachea extending into both lungs.
 - d. An autopsy blood sample has a carbon monoxide level of 31% saturation.
2. Additional toxicology studies are negative for alcohol, amphetamines, barbiturates, cocaine, cannabinoids, benzodiazepines, opiates and phencyclidine.
3. Multiple stab wounds of the chest:
 - a. Two stab wounds perforate the sternum with one passing through the front wall of the heart; second wound scrapes the front wall of the heart.
 - b. One wound enters the sternum but does not go through it.
 - c. Associated with 50cc of blood in the pericardial sac
4. Left chest cavity with 900-1000cc of liquid blood from resuscitation.

CAUSE OF DEATH:

- A. Inhalation of smoke and soot.
- B. Fire.

OTHER CONDITIONS:

Multiple stab wounds.

OPINION:

From the autopsy findings and present investigation, it is my opinion the manner of death is suicide. MJC

Michael J. Chambliss MD
MICHAEL J. CHAMBLISS, M.D.
Forensic Pathologist

MJC - 132722089 - rb - 029

d: 05/02/2016

t: 05/02/2016

St. Louis University Toxicology Laboratory Report
6059 N. Hanley Road, Berkeley, Missouri 63134

Name: [REDACTED]

Age:

Race:

Tox # 2016-0505
Sex:Requesting Agency: FRESNO COUNTY CORONER
(Agency Case No.: 16-01-222)=====
Blood:

CO:

CARBON MONOXIDE: _____ 31% SATURATED

Comments: Cut-off values available upon request

=====

Requested by: DR. CHAMBLISS Date: 01/21/16

Received in Lab:

Date/Time: 02/02/16//09:00 AM

Report by: DR. CHRISTOPHER LONG

Date/Time: 02/22/2016//06:34 AM



Toxicology Report

TRMC-Mineral King Laboratory, 880 E. Merritt Ave., STE 107-108, Tulare, CA 93274

Phone: (559) 685-3456 Fax: (559) 685-8745

Directors: Gary Walter M.D. - Jue-Rong Zhang M.D. Ph.D - Sharon Fong C.L.S.



Collected By: Dr. Chambliss
Date/Time Collected: 1/21/2016 14:45
Date/Time Received: 1/22/2016 09:10
Completion date: 1/29/2016 15:21

Name/DOB: [REDACTED] (00/00/00)
Accession #: 1600559
Case Number: 16-01.222

FRESNO COUNTY SHERIFF CORONER
3333 E. American #G
Fresno, CA 93725
(559) 600-3400

Specimen Type: BLOOD

GRAY TOP/PERIPHERAL BLOOD

Blood Alcohol {by GC} Results -- Units in % (g/100mL)

Approved by: SM

TESTED BY: SM

TEST DATE: 1/28/16

Blood Alcohol (Ethanol)= 0.00 %

Alcohol testing performed on gray top tube (containing preservative and anti-coagulant), unless otherwise specified.

Legal limit 0.08% for motor vehicle operation.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the state of California, that the attached blood alcohol analysis was performed during the regular course of my duties, and is a true and correct copy thereof. I further certify that I am an approved FORENSIC ALCOHOL ANALYST or SUPERVISOR by the state of California, that I am qualified to perform this analysis pursuant to Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations, and that the equipment used in arriving at the result was in proper working order at the time the analysis was performed and that the recording of the result was done at the time of the analysis. The lab accepted policy and procedures for Forensic Alcohol Analysis have been accepted by the State of CA and were followed during this analysis.

Signature:

Toxicology Report

TRMC-Mineral King Laboratory, 880 E. Merritt Ave., STE 107-108, Tulare, CA 93274

Phone: (559) 685-3456 Fax: (559) 685-8745

Directors: Gary Walter M.D. - Jue-Rong Zhang M.D. Ph.D - Sharon Fong C.L.S.



Collected By: Dr. Chambliss

Date/Time Collected: 1/21/2016 14:45

Date/Time Received: 1/22/2016 09:10

Completion date: 1/22/2016 16:27

Name/DOB: [REDACTED] (00/00/00)

Accession #: 1600558

Case Number: 16-01.222

FRESNO COUNTY SHERIFF CORONER
3333 E. American #G
Fresno, CA 93725
(559) 600-3400

Specimen Type: BLOOD

CORONER BOTTLE/PERIPHERAL BLOOD

Blood Drug Screen {by ELISA} Results

Approved by: SC

Amphetamines	Negative
Barbiturates	Negative
Cannabinoids	Negative
Cocaine (Metabolite)	Negative
Benzodiazepines	Negative
Opiates	Negative
Phencyclidine	Negative

Accession #: 1600558/1

This report continues... (Final)

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to begin with the letter 'S'.

Toxicology Report

TRMC-Mineral King Laboratory, 880 E. Merritt Ave., STE 107-108, Tulare, CA 93274
Phone: (559) 685-3456 Fax: (559) 685-8745
Directors: Gary Walter M.D. - Jue-Rong Zhang M.D. Ph.D - Sharon Fong C.L.S.



Collected By: Dr. Chambliss
Date/Time Collected: 1/21/2016 14:45
Date/Time Received: 1/22/2016 09:10
Completion date: 1/22/2016 16:27

Name/DOB: [REDACTED] (00/00/00)
Accession #: 1600558
Case Number: 16-01.222

Specimen Type: BLOOD

FRESNO COUNTY SHERIFF CORONER
3333 E. American #G
Fresno, CA 93725
(559) 600-3400

MKL ELISA Drug Screen Limits of Detection[]

Approved by: []

PANEL	THRESHOLD
Amphetamines	5 ng/mL
Methamphetamines	5 ng/mL
Barbiturates	5 ng/mL
Cocaine	10 ng/mL
Benzodiazepines	5 ng/mL
Opiates	5 ng/mL
PCP	5 ng/mL
THC	5 ng/mL

A cut-off of 10 ng/mL was adopted and validated by MKL to ensure the detection of all true positives.

Toxicology Report

TRMC-Mineral King Laboratory, 880 E. Merritt Ave., STE 107-108, Tulare, CA 93274

Phone: (559) 685-3456 Fax: (559) 685-8745

Directors: Gary Walter M.D. - Juc-Rong Zhang M.D. Ph.D - Sharon Fong C.L.S.



Collected By: Dr. Chambliss

Name/DOB: [REDACTED] (00/00/00)

Date/Time Collected: 1/21/2016 14:45

Accession #: 1600560

Date/Time Received: 1/22/2016 09:10

Case Number: 16-01.222

Completion date: 2/19/2016 11:27

Specimen Type: BLOOD

FRESNO COUNTY SHERIFF CORONER
3333 E. American #G
Fresno, CA 93725
(559) 600-3400

LAV TOP #1/PERIPHERAL BLOOD/SEND OUT TO DR. LONG FOR HECO

Carbon Monoxide Shipping

Approved by: SF

Carbon Monoxide Shipping Specimen shipped
Specimen Shipped



MARGARET MIMS
Sheriff-Coroner
3333 E. American Avenue, Suite G
Fresno, CA 93725

Fresno, California, 01/20/2016 15:48:00)
IN THE MATTER OF INVESTIGATION HELD)
UPON THE BODY OF [REDACTED])
DECEASED.....))

OoOOoo

While on duty at the Fresno Sheriff Coroner's Office, I received a call at about 1606 hours January 20, 2016 from Mayra Negrete, a nurse at Community Regional Medical Center in Fresno. She was reporting a death that occurred in the emergency department. The decedent was temporarily identified as John Doe 1-3-16. He was later identified as [REDACTED] via fingerprint. The decedent was a 51 year old Caucasian male. He was pronounced deceased by Dr. Caiafa at 1548 hours on January 20, 2016.

Per information received from Negrete, the decedent arrived at the hospital at about 1541 hours via ambulance with CPR in progress. Hospital staff continued rescue efforts, but were not able to resuscitate the decedent.

Negrete stated the decedent was involved in a house fire. As he was being removed from the house, firefighters saw that he had multiple stab wounds to his chest. When Paramedic Castro of American Ambulance arrived on scene, the decedent was pulseless and non-breathing with CPR already in progress. Paramedic Castro saw that the decedent had 3 wounds to the chest with minimal bleeding. She performed a bilateral needle thoracostomies to the decedent's chest before transporting the decedent to the hospital.

Negrete said the decedent was found to have soot in his airway. She did not have any additional information about the circumstances leading to his death.

Based on this information Lt. Padilla and I responded to CRMC. We arrived at about 1655 hours. The decedent was supine on the gurney. He had been placed in a body bag prior to my arrival. He was not wearing any clothing. I saw that he had been intubated and had a thoracotomy to his right chest. He also had a large bandage to his chest with a significant amount of blood on his chest. I pulled the bandages back and saw that he had 3 wounds to his chest. I did not see any other signs of injury or trauma on him.

I placed his hands in brown paper bags, to preserve any possible evidence before his body was transported to the Fresno Sheriff Coroner's Office.

I was also contacted by Detective Tony Rivera (# 1146) with Fresno Police Department. He stated the scene of the incident was at 648 N Van Ness. Lt. Padilla and I also responded to the scene. We arrived at about 1834 hours and met with Detective Rivera. He stated the Fresno Fire Department was south of the scene on an unrelated call. A passerby (who was not identified to me) saw the smoke coming from the front of the decedent's residence. The passerby called 911 notified the firefighters who were down the street.

Upon the arrival of the Fresno Fire Department, they tried to enter through the front door. It was barricaded shut. They then moved to the door on the north side of the house. This door was also barricaded shut. They were eventually able to get this door open. As the firefighters made their way into the decedent's house, they found him in the back of the house. As the decedent was being carried out, they noticed blood on his chest and later saw that they appeared to be stab wounds.

Detective Rivera said the decedent had multiple surveillance cameras outside if his house and would be looking into any possible video footage. Based on his preliminary investigation nobody was seen coming or going into the decedent's residence and the residence was well secured.

Fire Investigators at the scene said the fire began in the front room of the house. The decedent used an unknown flammable product.

As I conducted my investigation, I saw the living room where the fire originated. There were various burned items that were strewn about. I saw that the front door had been cut away. I saw that there were 2x4 pieces of wood that were affixed to the wall and a portion of the remaining door. The house was very unkept. There was a mattress on the floor with a small amount of blood. In the kitchen area, (where the decedent was found) there was also a small amount of blood on the floor by the door. I saw that the door in the kitchen (which led to the back yard) had been secured with 2x4 pieces of wood. The wood had been removed by the Fresno Fire Department prior to my arrival. I also saw a plank of wood over an adjacent kitchen window.

On a later date Detective Rivera stated the cameras to the exterior of the decedent's house were functioning just prior to the arrival of the fire department. The decedent had cameras to the inside of his house. These cameras were functioning until a day prior to his death. The inside footage shows the decedent sitting in the living room area of the house with a large knife. The decedent displayed the knife in front of the camera and took it to another room. The decedent later approached the camera and appeared to turn it off. There wasn't any additional footage after this time.

Detective Rivera also provided a copy of the video from the firefighter's helmet camera. The video showed that it was very difficult to gain entry into the decedent's home. The fence outside was secure and the doors were not easily opened, even with an ax. (Refer to FPD case # 16-4815 for further information.)

The decedent was taken to the Fresno Sheriff Coroner's Office where Dr. Michael Chambliss performed an autopsy and submitted samples for toxicological evaluation. Per Dr. Chambliss' findings, the decedent died as a result of inhalation of smoke and soot due to fire.

Toxicology results were negative for drugs and alcohol.

The decedent's manner of death was determined to be a suicide. The incident occurred at 648 N Van Ness in Fresno at an unknown hour on January 20, 2016.

The decedent's family was notified of his death by the Fresno Police Department.

The Fresno Sheriff Coroner's Office did not receive any property.

The decedent's disposition was handled by Palm La Paz Funeral & Cremations at the request of his family.

LORETTA ANDREWS, DEPUTY CORONER